

# Recommendations for 2003-2005

1. Complete a descriptive census of the public health workforce to document the size and range of workers available today and to identify training needs.

Effective workforce planning requires that we have basic information about today's workforce—its size, range of professional expertise, and distribution of basic capacity.

2. Adopt a set of expected worker competencies, linked to *The Standards for Public Health*, as the basis for developing training programs, college course curricula, performance measurement, and other aspects of public health workforce development processes.

Public health workers who are well-prepared to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow must have a thorough understanding of public health—in addition to the specific discipline for which they have been trained (i.e., medicine and biology). The use of a standard set of competencies will facilitate coordinated training and development efforts.

3. Develop a training system that links expected competencies with learning opportunities, tracks training data, and provides maximum flexibility in helping people obtain the information they need to perform their work.

Today's workers need continuous access to information that changes rapidly. They never stop learning, and they must become adept at finding information quickly. They must be able to rely on a range of sources, drawing from computers, video, print, and on-line literature, and real-time consultation with colleagues in neighboring counties—or countries.

4. Collect and distribute exemplary practices for increasing public health workforce diversity.

The composition of the public health workforce should reflect the communities served. Community-based efforts to recruit and train a diverse workforce will have long-term impact.

5. Pursue strategies that address leadership development and systematic incentives for workforce development such as establishing credentials for public health workers.